

*"While the Church exhorts civil authorities to seek peace, not war, and to exercise discretion and mercy in imposing punishment on criminals, it may still be permissible to take up arms to repel an aggressor or to have recourse to capital punishment. There may be a legitimate diversity of opinion even among Catholics about waging war and applying the death penalty, but not however with regard to abortion and euthanasia."*

-- Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, Prefect for the Doctrine of the Faith and Dean of the College of Cardinals (before he was Pope Benedict XVI)

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Your Excellency,

For a number of election cycles, I updated and sent out copies of my book, "Defeating the Culture of Death: the Pro-Life Vote" to all of the bishops and higher clergy in America. The premise is simple... if Catholics would vote their faith, the culture of death (abortion, homosexual marriage, embryonic stem cell research, euthanasia, and cloning) would be defeated. When candidates and parties recoil from abortion and undermining the family as they currently do entitlement reform (the third rail of politics), this nightmare will finally end. Catholics will vote their faith when the bishops fully engage in educating our brothers and sisters on the issues. A divided Catholic vote makes the Church impotent in public policy and irrelevant in discussions of public morality.

What divides the Catholic vote? Conflicting messages. The unique feature of my book is looking at the party platforms in light of Catholic teaching. The platforms are the policy agenda for each party and provide detail on their priorities. Over the years, the Democrats have slowly removed explicit mention of the culture of death to where there now remain only two issues noted in the platform: abortion and LGTBQ "marriage equality." This no longer requires a book on the subject... but it definitely deserves a mention from the pulpit!

**Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship**, viii: *"The threat of abortion remains our pre-eminent priority because it directly attacks our most vulnerable and voiceless brothers and sisters and destroys more than a million lives per year in our country alone."*

How can this be the pre-eminent priority for the Church if no one hears a message of condemnation for abortion's advocates? We live in a representative republic... it's one thing to be against abortion in the abstract but we must oppose the people and parties who are its champions. Abortion's proponents used to claim they wanted the practice to be "safe, legal, and rare." Now, they park a mobile abortion unit outside of their national convention for free and easy access—while a prince of the Church is inside blessing the proceedings! They can be so brazen because the Church offers no opposition. Is it any wonder Catholics are confused and divided?

**Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship**: 58. *The Church is involved in the political process but is not partisan. The Church cannot champion any candidate or party. Our cause is the defense of human life and dignity and the protection of the weak and vulnerable.*

I understand the policies expressed by the Church in regard to not taking partisan positions in elections. However, standing against evil isn't a partisan position. It only seems to be partisan when evil is sponsored by a political party—and that is even more dangerous! We don't inject the Church into politics by denouncing evil in public policy, the politicians have injected themselves into issues of life and death. The Church is scandalized in silence.

It is not an endorsement of the GOP to point out the evil supported by the Democratic Party. You don't compromise your impartiality by opposing the sponsors of evil in positions of public authority. On the contrary, you have shown partiality in your unwillingness to speak the truth about the proponents of the culture of death. You have compromised your authority in your silence. Would the GOP benefit from such condemnation in a two-party system? Yes. Should this potential benefit silence you? No.

Bishops spoke out against abortion as a policy for decades but it should prick the conscience of the hierarchy that *Roe v Wade* wasn't overturned due to the advocacy and work of the Church. It was accomplished by President Donald Trump through intentional judicial appointment of those who would look beyond partisan positions to a proper interpretation of law. He made it a policy priority for his administration to undo *Roe* and he accomplished his goal. On page 50 of the 2024 Democratic National Platform, they promise to *pass national legislation to make Roe the law of the land again*. Does that deserve a rebuke from the bishops after so many decades seeking its repeal? Is this worth a mention to Catholic voters?

Ez 3:18 *If I say to the wicked, You shall surely die—and you do not warn them or speak out to dissuade the wicked from their evil conduct in order to save their lives—then they shall die for their sin, but I will hold you responsible for their blood.*

**Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: 34.** *A Catholic cannot vote for a candidate who favors a policy promoting an intrinsically evil act, such as abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, deliberately subjecting workers or the poor to sub-human living conditions, redefining marriage in ways that violate its essential meaning, or racist behavior, if the voter's intent is to support that position.*

President Biden (“Catholic”?) received little condemnation for his personal and policy advocacy for abortion. From page 49 of the 2024 Democrat Platform: *President Biden signed three executive orders and a presidential memorandum to stand up for reproductive rights. The Administration is protecting access to abortion. VP Harris vows to go beyond what has been done so far! In multiple states, Democrats are waging a legal war in favor of mandating puberty blockers for confused adolescents in defiance of parental rights! What does someone have to do to receive a rebuke from the bishops? Politicians are campaigning for a job, nothing more. We should not hire those who stand against our moral and religious values to make laws for us.* I ask you to call them out in the model of our Lord Who decried the leadership of the Scribes and Pharisees (Matt 23). Call out these woes against the Democratic Party as Christ called down the seven woes on Jewish leaders. Although political from their perspective, this is our moral and religious duty as the Church.

It’s interesting that your document only included racism in the list of intrinsic evils starting in 2020. Given the constant drumbeat of the Democratic Party and their mouthpieces in the Press since President Obama’s election in 2008, it’s a fairly obvious intention to seek to equate the parties—and it is a source of great confusion. The Democratic Party would be soundly condemned in your voting guide except that they label everything done in opposition to them “racism.” Your guide gives cover for those who want to ignore your “pre-eminent priority.”

**No one supports the GOP to promote alleged racism. On the other hand, many are voting for the Democratic Party expressly to restore national abortion rights and promote LGBTQ marriage equality!**

**Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: 42.** *Yet if a candidate's position on a single issue promotes an intrinsically evil act, such as legal abortion, redefining marriage in a way that denies its essential meaning, or racist behavior, a voter may legitimately disqualify a candidate from receiving support.*

Scripture tells us there are four sins that cry out to God for vengeance: murder (Gen 4:10), sodomy (Gen 17:20-21), oppression of orphans and widows (Ex 2:23), and cheating laborers of their due (James 5:4). The first two of these are fundamentally in conflict with the moral law and always wrong no matter how they are conducted—and platform items for the Democrats at all levels of government. There is no “right” way to do either of them. The latter two are subjects for public policy debates. No political party has a plank in their platform advocating for the oppression of orphans and widows or cheating of laborers. These sins are only an issue in any election to the extent of conflicting perspectives on public policy. We may disagree how a party or politician goes about caring for orphans, widows, and laborers—but these are public policy debates, not intrinsic evil. How can you equate abortion with “racist behavior”?

Catholics represent about 20% of the electorate overall—and shrinking. No politician should be able to advocate for intrinsic evil and expect Catholic votes—no politician can be elected without Catholic acquiescence in a national or state election. Yet, Catholics have split our vote down the middle for decades due to conflicting guidance. No one respects our priorities because we don’t stand for them ourselves! Unfortunately, most bishops have done next to nothing to correct this problem. Too many bishops waste political bandwidth explaining the priorities of the Church regarding immigration reform, publicly-funded healthcare, and climate change. The Church must speak as one about real and threatening evil to human life and dignity before opening a dialogue on other issues.

Most responses I receive from dissenting bishops and priests regarding my efforts quote the need to maintain the Church’s tax-exempt status. How free are we when the Church considers Herself subject to the rules of government? The Church isn’t tax-exempt because of 501c3. She was tax-exempt before churches were added to the code in 1954. The Church is tax-exempt because she pre-dates the government and our Founding Fathers did not want to have government control of churches. It’s that simple. The 501c3 code is a primary example of the way government takes control... government says it is merely codifying an existing relationship and nothing will change. However, once codified, the government holds the threat to rescind the code. What should exist after the rescission is what existed for 200+ years before that... churches are still tax-exempt. That is not what the government says will happen, though, so the Church complies.

Churches were added to the 501c3 code as a tool of control and specifically to silence the Church and other non-profits. Sen. Lyndon Johnson did not like such organizations having a significant influence in shaping public policy. What we have become is direct result of this action. The Church has a greatly reduced influence in public life and intrinsic evil has become a staple of public policy. Are you aware that churches do not have to

apply for 501c3 qualification? Almost all qualifying organizations must fill out IRS Forms 1023 and 1024. Churches are not required to file form 1023 because they are considered covered by 501c3 *automatically*. Donations to churches are *automatically* tax-deductible. Churches have a mandatory exception to filing tax returns. IRS code *automatically* exempts churches from its requirements.

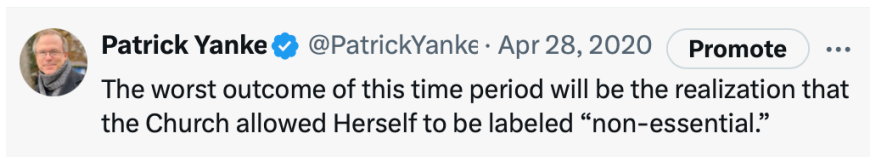
In short, the Catholic Church in America is voluntarily silent in the face of intrinsic evil... and misguided.

Unfortunately, the reality is that many of our bishops and priests are providing aid and comfort to the Democratic Party. While the Democrats vow in their national platform to cut every barrier to taxpayer funding of abortion, Bishop Stowe of Lexington, KY, called President Trump “anti-life”... because he’s “selfish.” Bishops called for canonical penalties for those enforcing immigration laws under President Trump. When President Trump advocated for religious liberty at the John Paul II Shrine, Archbishop Gregory called his visit “reprehensible.” Apparently, bishops can take sides in these partisan political debates. Can there be any wonder at the confusion sown among the faithful?

*Bishops, to whom is assigned the task of ruling the Church of God, should, together with their priests, so preach the news of Christ that all the earthly activities of the faithful will be bathed in the light of the Gospel. All pastors should remember too that by their daily conduct and concern they are revealing the face of the Church to the world, and men will judge the power and truth of the Christian message thereby. (Second Vatican Council, Gaudium et Spes, no. 43)*

Our liberal Catholic neighbors don’t listen to us. They listen to the biased Press and the lying politicians. In the absence of truth coming from the bishops, they are acting on those lies. They have been taught to believe that they should form their own consciences and the USCCB’s voting guide has been written vaguely enough to give cover to any position and rationale. Buried near the end of your prior guide is the statement, “*Abortion, the deliberate killing of a human being before birth, is never morally acceptable and **must always be opposed.***” In my opinion, this should be in the front of your guide as the first hurdle any candidate or party must cross before soliciting Catholic votes. Readers should only go past page one for any political party not supporting abortion and other intrinsic evils. The Democratic Party is the greatest advocate for abortion outside of China and they should be opposed by Catholic voters according to the guide published by the bishops. It’s true! You should teach it—or at least not silence those who do!

The Democrats have made it clear that their number one priority is restoring *Roe v Wade* as the law of the land—it’s in their platform! You have made it clear in *Forming Consciences* that opposition to abortion is your “pre-eminent issue.” Doesn’t that naturally put you at odds? It’s not your fault they have taken this road. It is your responsibility—according to the pre-eminence of this issue—to oppose them. Sadly, you don’t have a good track record of opposition to Democrat policies. During the COVID-19 pandemic, you shuttered the churches at their insistence and denied the faithful the Sacraments they are due. I said at the time that the worst thing to come from COVID-19 would be that the Church labeled Herself non-essential. Is it any wonder our numbers are falling?



To defend abortion, the Democrats oppose any justice proposed by a GOP president—even before the name has been released. When the name is released, it’s axiomatic that the nominee will be mercilessly vilified in Senate confirmation hearings and the Press. Kamala Harris even made issue of a nominee’s membership in the Knights of Columbus! If they take the Senate, they will prevent any more pro-life judges—and try to block faithful Catholic nominees. Failing to make a nomination, they have already put forward a plan to stack the court—for abortion. A vote for any Democrat gives them control of legislative bodies to implement their agenda.

For their support of intrinsic evil, the Democrats should lose elections—and lose badly. **My hope is that you and your fellow bishops will make support for evil the next “third-rail” of politics that no politician or party would ever dare touch again.** It isn’t enough that abortion be narrowly defeated in its next Supreme Court challenge. The challenges will simply continue until the court is sympathetic again. The sponsors of the culture of death must know that the Church will stand against them as long as they promote abortion and other intrinsic evils. They must know this will doom any campaign. This is a lasting message to them and any other party seeking power. That is a pro-life legacy for generations. How sad it will be for the Church if President Trump deserves more credit than you for his courage in standing against the culture of death in America.

The Supreme Court ended the national policy of abortion on demand. It has been sent to each of the States. What has been the result? Many States are enshrining abortion in their State laws! Where are the bishops of each State standing against this? If you are out there, I haven't seen or heard from you. This is our time to stamp out abortion, and the Church is failing to even lead their own localities against the culture of death! While we watch our American culture crumble and Democrat-run cities turn into dystopian nightmares, can you honestly say your approach is working?

In the past, some bishops have spoken out individually—but none have done so directly against the Democratic Party. The most direct statement so far was by Fr James Altman who made it very clear that being a Catholic is incompatible with being a Democrat. His message was endorsed by Bishop Strickland of Tyler, TX and “corrected” by his own bishop... for his tone. I don't know of another instance where a priest was publicly reprimanded for his tone in speaking the truth. Fr John Lankeit of the diocese of Phoenix, during his homily at EWTN in the Fall of 2016, laid out the issues and the Catholic position firmly and clearly as the voice of his Bishop. His example in every diocese of America would end State sponsorship of abortion. If you haven't seen it, search for “Homily for October 2, 2016” on YouTube. I pray it may serve as a template to your own contemplations.

It's good that there have been priests speaking out but their views lack the full authority of the Church. **When the bishops speak from the authority given to them by Christ, then the Church will have spoken. Abortion ends in America the moment the bishops say it ends.** What are you waiting for? Early voting will start soon. The enemy of life is before you!

This letter went to every bishop, archbishop, and cardinal in the country. Talk to your brothers and encourage each other to tell the truth to Catholic voters... the flock you shepherd. Teach Catholics to vote their faith and end Catholic support for the culture of death.

In your silence, the enemy is solaced as the faithful are scandalized. The Church Militant is on the field looking for Her generals. Is it love to deny them your support? Is it love to bless the opposition in their sin? There is no truth without love and no love without truth. In speaking the truth boldly, **Let Christ, Who is Truth personified, go forth in defense of His Bride!** Let Christ, the Great Physician, heal our wounds.

I look forward to discussing this with you further and will pray for our efforts as a Church to stand firmly against those who advocate for evil in public policy. If I am in error, I respectfully request your correction. If I am not in error, I urgently request your support. I am at your service to discuss the issues, conduct voter education in your diocese, and support your efforts.

Asking Your Excellency's blessing, I am...

Respectfully yours in Christ,



Patrick Yanke

Catholic Speaker and Author of “Defeating the Culture of Death: the Pro-Life Vote”

Note: YouTube may have deleted Fr Lankeit's homily mentioned above... because silencing dissenting voices furthers Democracy? You can find a transcript here:

<https://files.ecatholic.com/14031/documents/2016/10/Homily%20OT%2027%20-%20October%202%202016%20Year%20C.pdf?t=1475518642000>